



CITY OF LONG BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER

September 18, 2018

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Opposition to SB 828 (Wiener): Land Use: Housing Element

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write in strong opposition to Senate Bill 828 (Wiener). This legislation proposes to make two significant changes with respect to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). First, SB 828 proposed to change the methodology for establishing RHNA; and second, SB 828 proposes to utilize RHNA as a housing production *mandate*.

While the City appreciates the need for RHNA as a housing production target, the way in which RHNA is established could be improved. Long Beach is encouraged this conversation has begun within the State Legislature. However, it is concerning that changes to the RHNA methodology were added to SB 828 on the last day of the State Legislative Session to amend a bill. Any change in the methodology for establishing RHNA is a significant change in the way housing production targets impact cities, and should be done in a systematic and transparent process with ample input from local jurisdictions.

With that said, the most egregious aspect of SB 828, and on which the City of Long Beach's opposition primarily lies, is with respect to the proposal to make RHNA a housing production mandate on cities, as opposed to a tool that can be used to plan for and maintain housing to meet a city's spectrum of housing needs. Existing State law, in Government Code Section 65584 (2) makes it clear that cities "should undertake all necessary actions to encourage, promote, and facilitate the development of housing to accommodate the entire regional housing need." This code section acknowledges the reality that future housing production "may not equal" the housing need established for the planning process. SB 828 proposes to strike this portion of existing State law and replaces it with a requirement that cities take "reasonable actions to ensure that future housing production meet, at a minimum, the regional housing need established for planning purposes." In doing so, SB 828 fails to recognize the reality that cities do not build housing, developers building housing; and the housing market is heavily influenced by regional economies.

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While the City of Long Beach supports the development of affordable housing, as evidenced by the 1,778 new affordable units that have been built, 2,093 existing units that have been preserved, and 367 units that have been rehabilitated in Long Beach over the last 10 years, the City strongly opposes SB 828, and requests your veto on this bill.

Sincerely,



Patrick H. West
CITY MANAGER

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Ricardo Lara, State Senate, 33rd District
The Honorable Janet Nguyen, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District